

3 October 1951

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: 2 October 1951

PLACE: Washington, D. C.

PERSONS PRESENT: Vannevar Bush,

25X1A

1. On the date indicated Dr. Bush saw me in his office at the Carnegie Institution of Washington at my request. The purpose of my call was to solicit the advice and recommendations of Dr. Bush concerning the manner in which CIA should make its research and development more vital and up-to-date; I also sought suggestions from him as to an individual who could head the research and development organization.

2. At the outset Dr. Bush did not talk directly in response to my queries but reminisced concerning the OSRD activity during the last war which was responsive to OSS requests. Dr. Bush recalled that whenever a requirement was posed by OSS a meeting of competent and imaginative scientists was called and a means to fulfill the requirement was thrashed out.

3. Dr. Bush volunteered that he felt a strong conviction that CIA needs a competent research and development organization, one of the major functions of which is to bring to the attention of the operators new devices, techniques and applications which can be used by them in their work. He feels that the research and development organization should not be mere order takers. He is also of the opinion that the CIA research and development organization need not be large. This is true, he holds because our interests cover the entire range of science and technology. We cannot in his opinion hope to maintain in our organization all of the different kinds of specialists that our interests require. We must, therefore, utilize the high specialization and competence of research organizations and of specialists elsewhere.

4. Bush emphasized that our interests and requirements will possess a considerable degree of change and therefore we ought to provide an effective means for consulting with outside people.

5. In passing Bush

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5. In passing Bush observed that the so-called war with the Soviet Union in his opinion might go on for many years indefinitely. He cited as an example the long war between Russia and Japan.

6. Bush stated that we should attempt to learn all that we can about the research and developmental activity of others by cutting in on their work.

7. He commented upon the desirable characteristics which a head of CIA research and development should possess. He listed them somewhat as follows:

- a. should be young,
- b. should possess a sense of humor,
- c. should be sufficiently competent as a scientist as to be somewhat known and sufficiently persona grata as to be received by scientists when it was necessary to consult with them,
- d. should be highly imaginative and the kind of person who must have a new idea every day.

8. Bush stated that he was at a loss to recommend names inasmuch as he didn't know any of the younger scientists. He mentioned [redacted] 25X1A Early of Division 19 OSRD, but noted that we could not secure [redacted] 25X1A In addition Bush thought him too old. Bush thought [redacted] 25X1A likewise would fit our bill admirably but asserted that we couldn't possibly get him either, although we should try.

9. Bush expressed regret that he didn't know enough of the younger scientists and suggested that we should query the following as to names:

25X1A [redacted]

25X1A [redacted]

SAR/JAF/gvm
cc:
1,2,3 - SAR
4 & 5 - SD/RE

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